"th se enduring matinee id ls"

FOR THE SERIAL LOVERS
WHO STILL REMEMBER
SATURDAY MATINEES

●

DECEMBER '70 - JANUARY '71
VOLUME 1 - CHAPTER 8

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THE SECRET OF TREASURE ISLAND is certainly among the best, if not *the* best, of the Columbia serials. It was their third serial, and released in '38. Thorough coverage will be given it in a future chapter of THOSE ENDURING MATINEE IDOLS.

Included in this "behind the scene" photo (seated clockwise at the table) are Walter Miller, Grant Withers, Sandra Karina, Patrick J. Kelly, and Gwen Gaze. At the door is Don Terry. Director Elmer Clifton is in plaid jacket standing next to camera.

MASTHEAD: Anthony Warde and I. Stanford Jolley (with glasses)

NAT LEVINE PRESENTS

RAY "CRASH" CORRIGAN in

Undersea Kingdom

A Republic Serial

Adaptation of Serial for TEMI
by ERIC HOFFMAN
Photo Captions by the Editor

UNDERSEA KINGDOM gave Ray Corrigan his first starring part (as well as his nickname "Crash"). It was Republic Pictures' second serial and concentrated pretty much on the action. Included were some *magnificently staged* battle scenes, with the main siege of the Sacred City of Atlantis used twice (once with a "night filter"). Corrigan had the physical image for the hero, and Monte Blue was delightfully evil as Unga Khan. C. Montague Shaw was properly scientific-appearing in his role of Professor Norton; Lois Wilde (Diana) made probably the worst newspaper reporter on record; from youngster Lee Van Atta (Billy) not too much was expected, or given; and, John Merton (Maloch) proved he could play "a good guy" when presented with the opportunity. Others included Smiley Burnette and Frankie Marvin as the unfunny comedy team of Briny and Salty; Booth Howard (Ditmar) and Lon Chaney, Jr. (Hakur) were among the Black Robes (the villains); and William Farnum (properly dignified as Sharad with Lane Chandler (Darius) spear-headed the White Robes (the gallant ones).

The plot had Corrigan as an officer at Annapolis Naval Academy. [Editor's Note: The "Good Conduct" ribbon was conspicuously absent from his uniform!] Professor Norton sends his young son, Billy, to bring Corrigan to his laboratory. When they arrive, Norton is telling Diana about his newest device: a machine that can predict earthquakes before they happen and, possibly, even send out a counter-ray to stop them. Norton's machine has picked up radio signals connected with a series of earthquakes that have been causing great damage, and he believes that they are originating from the bottom of the ocean where the continent of Atlantis was supposed to have vanished. His suspicion has been supported by the discovery of a recently produced piece of sculpture made from a metal called Orichalum (a combination of gold and copper). Yet, the secret of fusing the two metals had been lost centuries prior with the sinking of Atlantis.

(Editor's Note: The American College Dictionary defines Atlantis as "a mythical island in the Atlantic Ocean, first mentioned by Plato, supposedly west of Gibraltar, said to have finally sunk into the sea." Other works allude to it as a "continent.")

Anxious to learn the source of the earthquake signals, Norton reveals that he plans to go under the sea in a rocket-powered submarine of his own design. Doing so, he hopes to get to the ocean floor in time to use his counteracting ray on an impending earthquake.

Crash, Diana, a crewman named Joe, and two numbskull sailors named Salty and Briny, join Norton for the undersea journey. During the descent, Billy is discovered to have stowed away.

Norton's suspicions that Atlantis still exists prove correct. The lost continent is under a dome made of Orichalum metal, which protects it from the sea.

At Atlantis, two factions are locked in a brutal civil war. On one side are the forces of the kindly ruler, Sharad. Opposing him is the army of Unga Khan, a power-mad tyrant.

Khan, from his huge tower of metal, has been directing a concentrated campaign of warfare against the Sacred City (Sharad's domain). Besides his army, he puts to good use a huge Juggernaut (an armoured war tank); mechanical robots, called Volkites; and remote-controlled aircraft, referred to as Volplanes. To add to everything else, Khan has harnessed the power of the atom with which he has devised Atom Guns as well as a disintegrating ray powerful enough to wreck the entire undersea kingdom.

It is Unga Khan who has been causing the earthquakes on the Upper World as part of his diabolical plan to conquer it. However, he lacks sufficient rocket power to boost his metal tower thru the dome and to the Upper World.

Khan's machines detect Norton's counter-ray and he and his henchman, Ditmar, are able to locate Norton's submarine on their Reflectoplate (TV receiver). Khan orders: "Turn on the magnetic ray and bring them down into Atlantis (thru the tunnel)." He then commands the Imperial Guards (led by Captain Hakur) to ". . . capture the stranger from the Upper World."

The submarine surfaces on an inland lake. Crash, Diana, Norton and the others are confronted by the arrival of the Juggernaut bearing the Volkites (robots). [Editor's Note: A door in the side of the tank folded upwards and the robots walked erect from the vehicle via an angled ramp leading from the door to the ground. But this feat was shown only on occasion, and not in chapter one.]

Joe starts shooting at the robots. Realizing that his shots are futile, he panics. "They aren't human!" he screams. He is summarily destroyed by one of the robots with an Atom Gun. Crash and Billy attempt to escape up a mountain. However, Khan sees this in his Reflectoplate and announces: "A blast from the Invisible Ray Gun will soon stop them."

At the conclusion of chapter one, Crash and Billy are on top of the mountain peak as a torpedo hits. It explodes! They fall out of the scene and are apparently killed. (However, they jump in time from their perch and roll down the side of the peak to safety.)

In episode two, Norton, Diana and the two sailors are captured by the Black Robes and taken to Khan's tower . . . while the White Robes, led by Sharad's aide Darius, capture Crash and Billy. While being taken to the Sacred City in a chariot, Crash and Billy manage to overpower the driver. Crash heads for the tower (alone) to rescue Norton and Diana, leaving Billy in hiding. However, the youngster is eventually taken prisoner by the White Robes. During his first encounter in the tower, Crash is unable to free his friends.

Next, Crash goes to the Sacred City to rescue Billy. There he is accused of being a Black Robe and sentenced to combat in the arena with other captured Black Robes.

Crash defeats his opponents, yet refuses to kill the last one, Moloch. When he accepts the Sacred Sword of Victory from Sharad (allegedly to slaughter Moloch with), he breaks the sword. For this, he is sentenced to be dragged by a chariot until dead. After Crash is tied to the vehicle, two of the Black Robe gladiators seize Sharad and take off in the chariot—dragging Crash behind them.

Crash draws himself hand over hand into the chariot. He rescues Sharad! As a reward, he is made Commander of the Atlantian Army, with Moloch (seemingly) appointed his aide.

Meanwhile, Norton has been placed in Khan's Transforming Machine . . . and is now cheerfully, in apparent mad scientist fashion, going about his work of building rocket motors for Khan.

Later on, Sharad, Billy and Diana are in conference in the Sacred City when they hear the approach of the Juggernaut. They look out to see Crash tied to the front of the tank. When a short distance away from the gates to the city, Hakur (from inside the tank) addresses Crash: "All right, Corrigan. Tell your friends to hand over that priming powder or I'm going to ram thru those gates." Crash's typically heroic reply was, "Go ahead and ram!" Hakur does just that, and the gates are splintered by the tank! (*Next week*, the gates are opened in the nick of time, so the escape is certainly a "cheat.")

At the climax of chapter ten, the Sacred City is destroyed and Sharad killed by the Black Robes.

In the final episode, Billy, Diana, and the two sailors return to the Upper World in the submarine. Khan is successful in sending his tower crashing thru the protecting dome, bringing the sea in upon the remains of Atlantis. (Crash and Norton are aboard the tower.)

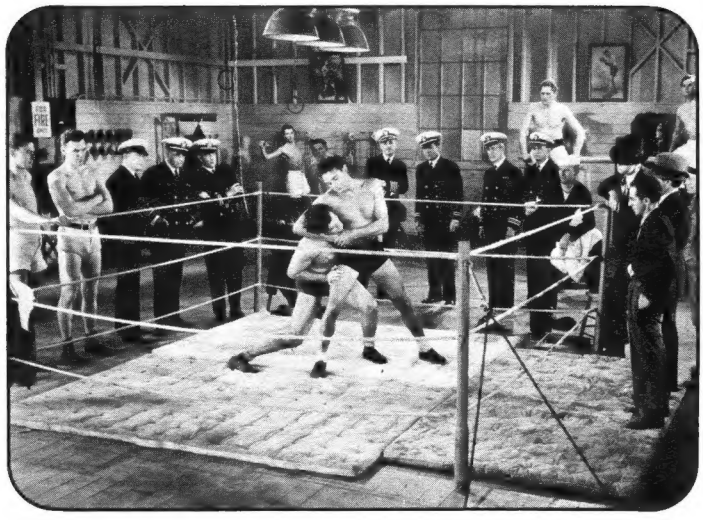
Crash uses Khan's Reflectoplate as a wireless to warn the Navy of the approaching tower. When the tower surfaces, Naval cruisers fire at it, only to find their shells cannot penetrate the "invisible wall of atom rays" surrounding it. However, Crash and Norton gain access to the power room and sabotage the electronic machines, neutralizing the atom rays. They, then, make for the Volplane launching pad room. Khan and Ditmar head there, too, planning to abandon the tower. But, Corrigan manages to knock out the two villains and he and Norton take off in a Volplane just moments before the tower is destroyed!

(Editor's Note: UNDERSEA KINGDOM was reissued under its original title on 7/8/50. For TV, it became "Sharad of Atlantis.")

CHAPTER TITLES

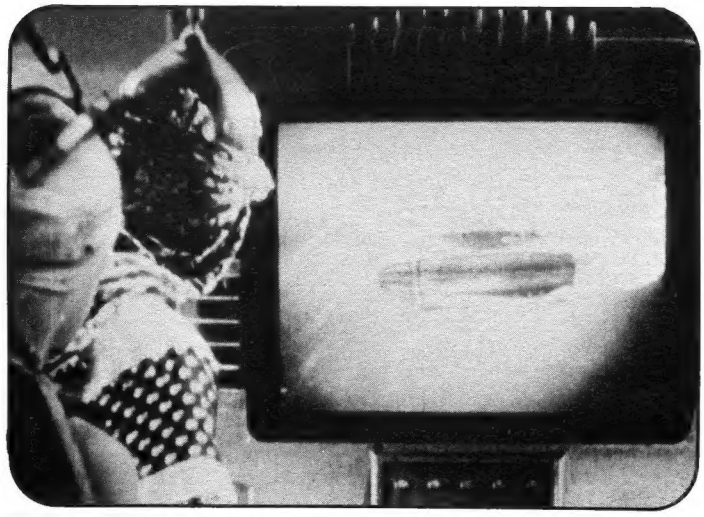
1. Beneath the Ocean Floor
2. The Undersea City
3. Arena of Death
4. Revenge of the Volkites
5. Prisoners of Atlantis
6. The Juggernaut Strikes
7. The Submarine Trap
8. Into the Metal Tower
9. Death in the Air
10. Atlantis Destroyed
11. Flaming Death
12. Ascent to the Upper World

DIRECTED BY
B. REEVES EASON and JOSEPH KANE



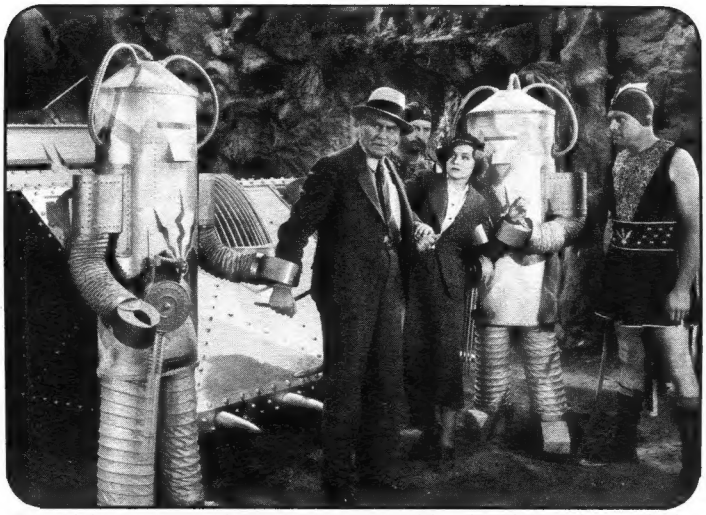
Crash Corrigan, right at the outset, is established as an Annapolis athlete, proficient at football and wrestling. Behind Crash, playing bit roles, are Lloyd Whitlock (Captain) and Jack Mulhall (Lieutenant). (1)

Prof. Norton sends his son, Billy, to bring Crash to his lab. Along with reporter Diana Compton, they decide to take Norton's submarine in search of the cause of severe earthquakes. Billy is a stowaway. (2)



Unga Khan, cruel and crafty ruler of the Black Robes, sees the rocket-propelled sub approaching Atlantis on his Reflectoplate. He orders Ditmar to turn on a "magnetic ray" and draw the sub to Atlantis. (3)

Fighting to save the Sacred City of Atlantis from Khan is the high priest, Sharad. His loyalists are called the White Robes. Kneeling is Martos (Ralph Holmes). At the right is Darius. (4)



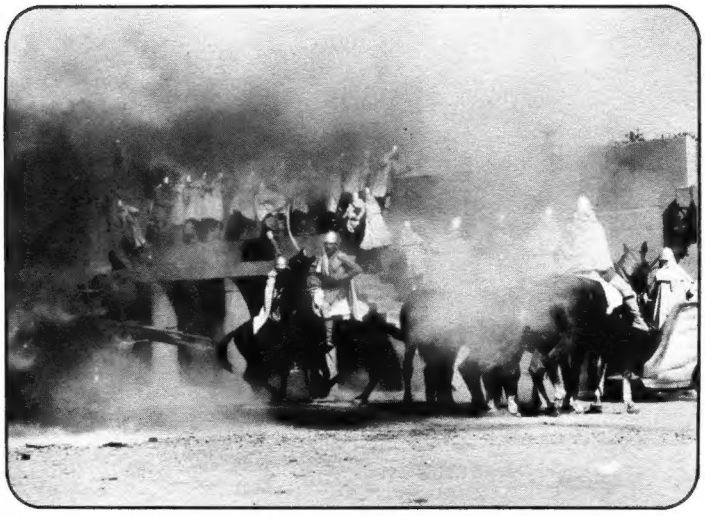
Meanwhile, Norton and Diana are captured by the Black Robes with the help of the Volkites (robots) and taken to Khan's metal tower in the Juggernaut (armored tank). Looking on is Zogg (Malcolm McGregor). (7)

Suspected of being a Black Robe, Crash becomes a captive of Sharad. He is to be tied to a chariot and dragged until dead. The other captives are Moloch, Gourck and Magna, who are never actually tied to the chariot. (5)

Norton is placed in the Transforming Cabinet, which affects his mind so he will do Khan's bidding. Khan wants Norton to construct rockets that will lift his tower to the Upper World. At the left is Ditmar. (8)

Gourk and Magna kidnap Sharad and take off in the chariot, pulling Crash behind them. Sharad is saved by Crash and they, in turn, by Moloch. Crash is made head of the Atlantian Army. This scene appeared later. (6)

In chapter four, Khan's entire army besieges Sharad's city. Crash and Moloch, hanging to a ladder, are sent toppling to the ground outside the wall. Mounted horsemen apparently ride over them. (9)

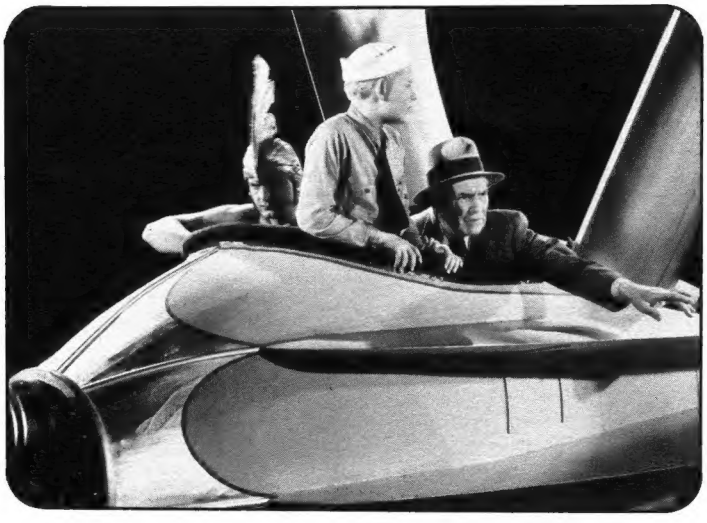


The Black Robes ride past, not over. Crash assumes the uniform of a Black Robe. Mistaken for Captain Hakur, he orders Zogg to sound a general retreat. The ruse works and the Sacred City is saved. (10)

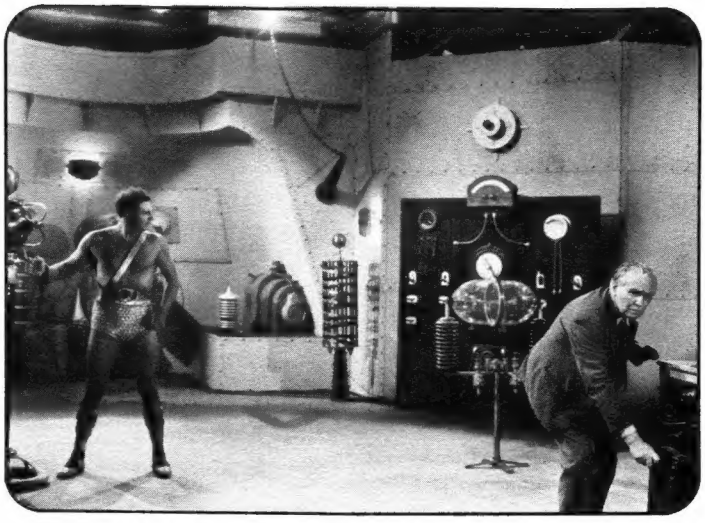
Crash, realizing the danger of being hit by a torpedo, sends the Volplane into a dive, making a forced landing. Nobody is seriously hurt. Norton (still under Khan's hypnotic spell) later returns to the tower. (13)

Archers, spearmen, the Juggernaut, and a flame thrower are all put to good use by Khan's forces during the battle. A volley of rockets are added in chapter ten to finally destroy Atlantis and kill Sharad. (11)

Crash and Moloch force Khan to transform Norton back to his former self in chapter 11. While attempting to escape, Moloch is killed. L. to R. are Zogg, Captain Hakur, Khan, Ditmar, Crash and Norton. (14)



The wind-up of episode nine has Norton, Crash and Billy escaping Khan's tower in one of his Volplanes. Khan orders aerial torpedoes fired. The plane is apparently hit by one and falls to the ground. (12)



Crash and Norton sabotage Khan's machinery after his tower makes its ascent to the Upper World. U.S. Navy guns do the rest. (Editor's Note: You can see the set lights and wall bracing at the top of photo.) (15)

THE VIGILANTES ARE COMING ('36) was Republic's third serial. Its plot was reminiscent of Rudolph Valentino's "The Eagle" released eleven years earlier.

The action was set in California in 1844. Don Loring (Livingston) leaves his father and brother at the family ranch to act as guide for Captain Fremont (a character who appeared only in the first and final two episodes, and played by Ray Corrigan). Unknown to the Lorings, General Jason Burr (wilily portrayed by Kohler) has discovered gold on their land and is mining it secretly with kidnapped peons. Colton (Lloyd Ingraham) and his daughter, Doris (Kay Hughes), are held prisoners and forced to aid in the operation of the mine.

Burr makes a pact with Count Raspinoff (Warwick) of the Imperial Russian government, who will supply him with a regiment of ex-Cossacks from the Russian colony of Fort Russe, as well as a supply of guns and ammunition, in return for gold.

Don Loring's father and brother come upon Burr and his men leaving the secret mine and are murdered by Barsam (Canutt). With the Lorings dead, Burr takes over their land and rule of the Sonoma Valley.

Word is relayed to Don, who returns secretly with Whipsaw (Hatton) and Salvation (Williams), two frontiersmen who were with him on Fremont's Oregon expedition. They go to the mission of Father Jose, who warns Don to hide his identity lest he meet the same fate as his father and brother. Don poses as a simple-minded organist at the mission . . . while adopting the black mask and cape of *The Eagle!*

The Eagle is soon striking at Burr's men (in fact, thru-out the next eleven episodes) until Burr is killed in a blast and Raspinoff, saying his country is no longer interested in the territory, takes down the Russian flag. The American flag is raised and Don Loring is made the first governor of California while, presumably, Doris becomes the (first) first lady.

One of the better climaxes saw *The Eagle* being knocked under a rock crusher in chapter four. Lying there stunned, the heavy guillotine-like hammer comes down right at *The Eagle's* head. (Salvation sees *The Eagle's* peril in time to pull him from under the rock crusher.)

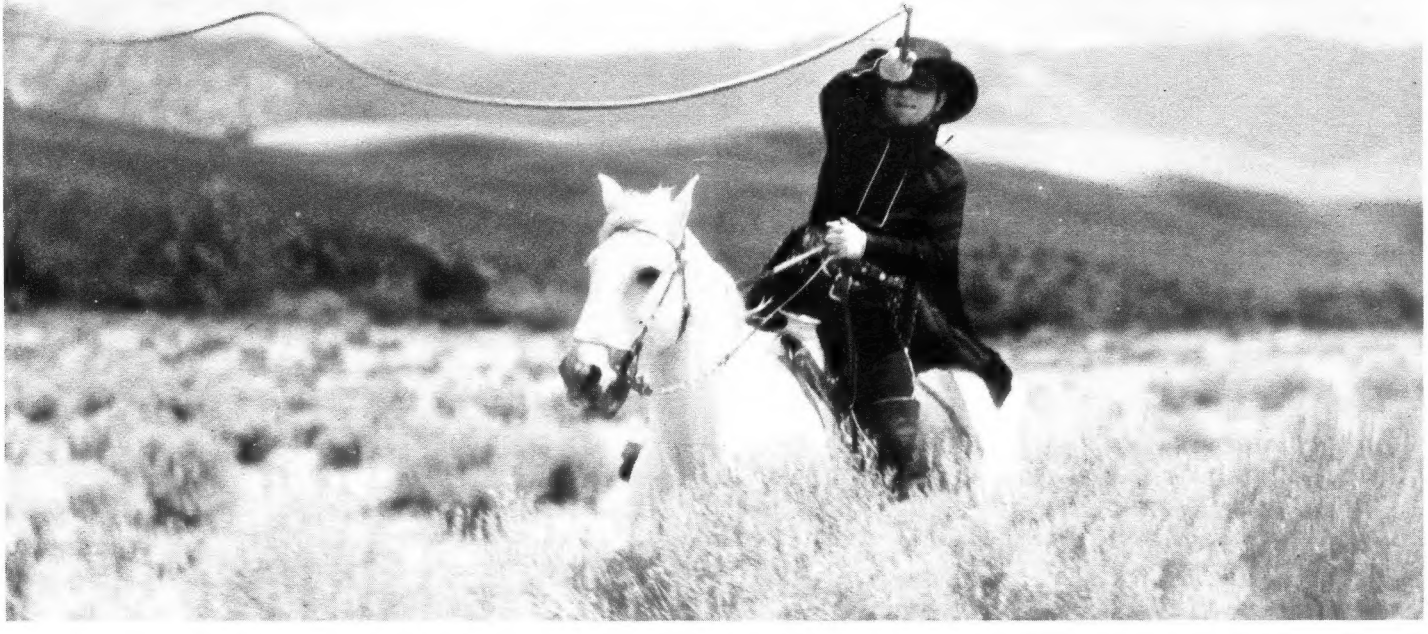
At the wind-up of chapter seven, *The Eagle* is engaged in a fierce fight with Petroff and his Cossacks. He loses his sword and stumbles over a chair and falls. The Cossacks plunge their swords downward and apparently into the helpless hero. (But when chapter eight opens up, the previous ending is no where in evidence. After *The Eagle* loses his sword and sees he is trapped, he swings on the chandelier and drop on the Cossacks . . . then makes good his escape.)

The title of the serial comes from the band of confidants Don Loring organizes in chapter two.

CHAPTER TITLES

1. **The Eagle Strikes**
2. **Birth of the Vigilantes**
3. **Condemned By Cossacks**
4. **Unholy Gold**
5. **Treachery Unmasked**
6. **A Tyrant's Trickery**
7. **Wings of Doom**
8. **A Treaty With Treason**
9. **Arrow's Flight**
10. **Prison of Flame**
11. **A Race With Death**
12. **Fremont Takes Command**

Below. Whilst Yakima Canutt played the villain Barsam, he also "stunted" for Livingston in the action sequences.



FOUR OF THE PRINCIPALS IN THE VIGILANTES ARE COMING were (L. to R. in foreground) Raymond Hatton, Kay Hughes, Bob Livingston and William Desmond. Strangely, publicity stills showing Livingston with the mask on are rare to come by.

Count Raspinoff (Robert Warwick) has *The Eagle* at bay. That's Jason Burr (Fred Kohler) confiscating his gun. In the film, avenger Don Loring wears his mask during this confrontation.

Burr learns *The Eagle*'s identity in chapter ten. Between Burr and Loring is Talbott (John Merton). Holding Loring is Harris (Bud Osborne).

Talbott and Harris have been ambushed and bound by the vigilantes. Chief minion of Count Raspinoff is Petroff (far left), the man with the "incredibly malevolent face," Robert Kortman — see pg. 59.

Doris Colton's father (Lloyd Ingraham) is rescued twice by the vigilantes from the hidden gold mine (in episodes 4 and 11). At the extreme right is Salvation (Guinn "Big Boy" Williams).

Adaptation of ACE DRUMMOND for TEMI by JIM STRINGHAM

ACE DRUMMOND, Universal's '36 aviation serial was made up of ingredients guaranteed to keep any viewer entranced for thirteen weeks. The setting was China, and the prize a "a mountain of jade." A party of Russians, secret service agents, and the mystery flyers of *The Dragon* battled in the sky, on the ground, and in vast underground caverns.

International Airways is to offer the first round-the-world air passenger service when its great Clipper ships are able to traverse China. Their initial flights are attacked by the fighting planes and mysterious electrical weapon of *The Dragon.* This mysterious figure is determined to drive off the intruders and continually menaces International's project. Trouble shooter Drummond (John King) arrives and is quickly joined by Jerry (Noah Beery, Jr.), the company's local head mechanic, and Peggy Trainor (Jean Rogers), whose father had disappeared while searching for a priceless deposit of jade.

Trainor (C. Montague Shaw) is the prisoner of a Dr. Bauer (Fredrik Vogeding), the leader of a sinister Russian gang—played by three of the most unlikely "Russian" actors you can imagine: Lon Chaney, Jr. (Ivan), Stanley Blystone (Sergei), and Ed Cobb (Nicolai). They, too, seek the jade. Drummond rescues Trainor, but he again disappears after their car is bombed by *Dragon* planes.

Much of the action centered around a Buddhist temple and monastery. Three of its inhabitants were the Grand Lama (Guy Bates Post), ruler of the temple and the native population; the hostile Kai-Chek (Chester Gan); and scholarly Chang-Ho (Arthur Loft).

Trainor's diary is stolen and Peggy kidnapped from the building. Drummond is repeatedly endangered there when he faces poison gas, the crushing walls of a prison chamber, and enraged natives incited against him by Kai-Chek.

At International, *Dragon* suspects included Winston (Robert Warwick) and Meredith (Selmer Jackson). Henry Kee (James B. Leong) and Johnny Wong (James Eagles) are mysterious Mongolians involved in the action, apparently in opposition to Bauer. In chapter six, the doctor is removed from the list of suspects by a bullet, and names Kee with his last words.

In the foreground (L. to R.) are Ace Drummond, Kai-Chek, and Jerry. Behind them are Doctor Trainor and his daughter, Peggy; Chang-Ho; and the Grand Lama. Guy Bates Post, who played the Lama, was more noted for his stage career. It spanned five decades. Bates died at the age of 92 on 1/16/68.

Peggy and her father escape when Drummond penetrates *The Dragon's* underground headquarters, but at the temple, *The Dragon* again appears and escapes with the secret of the jade. Ace and Jerry block his attack on International's airport and are then able to destroy his planes. He is pursued to the monastery, where, unmasked, he dies attempting to escape in Drummond's plane.

The serial depended more on a strong plot than continuous action, but the thrills were there. Aerial battles took place in almost every chapter. Things changed, however, on the ground and slowed down. But there was mystery, intrigue, and, in the final chapter, a real surprise for most of us. [Editor's Note: The identity of *The Dragon* is camouflaged in this paragraph. Can you unmask the culprit?]

Cliff Smith and Ford Beebe directed. The screenplay was based on the adventure strip by Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker (see pg. 1, chapter one).

CHAPTER TITLES

1. **Where East Meets West**
2. **The Invisible Enemy**
3. **The Doorway of Doom**
4. **The Radio Riddle**
5. **Bullets of Sand**
6. **Evil Spirits**
7. **The Trackless Trail**
8. **The Sign in the Sky**
9. **Secret Service**
10. **The Mountain of Jade**
11. **The Dragon Commands**
12. **The Squadron of Death**
13. **The Worlds Akin**

Ace and Jerry succeed in obtaining a helmet worn by *The Dragon*. He obviously had replacements. The lower portion was drawn across his face and secured with three snap buttons, leaving only his eyes exposed. And they were concealed with goggles.

THE PHANTOM RIDER (Universal, '36) centered around the ingenuous plot of having outlaws trying to gain control of land in which they know a railroad is going to buy the right-of-way. In this case, it's Hidden Valley Ranch and its surrounding acres. Not so incidently, on the land is a hidden gold mine. A map showing the location of the mine passes back and forth between Buck Grant (Buck Jones) and his principal antagonist, Harvey Delaney (Harry Woods), before the final fade-out.

To thwart Delaney and his minions, and not give away his identity, Buck becomes THE PHANTOM RIDER. Unfortunately, the disguise is both absurd and cumbersome.

For some strange reason, there was plenty of action in the proceedings until the cliffhangers came. A case in point is the climax of chapter seven. Buck goes into a cave to elude oncoming outlaws. There he is surprised by other bandits who get the drop on him and command, "Hands up!" Fade-out.

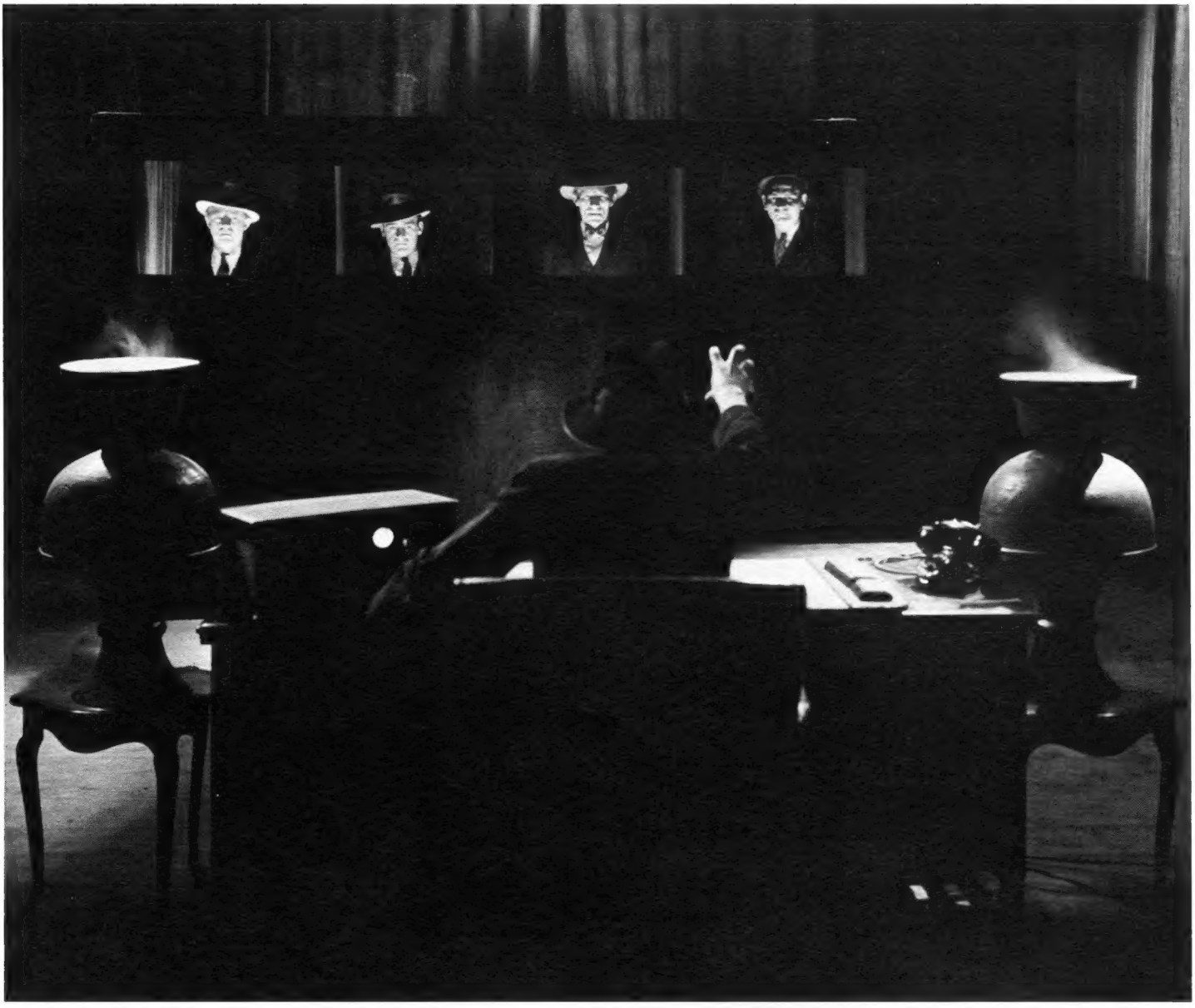
Buck's sidekick, Shorty (Matt McHugh), is fatally wounded in chapter one. But he is quick to take on another partner in the second episode, Spooky (George Cooper). There were two femme leads: Mary Grayson (Marla Shelton), who winds-up owning Hidden Valley Ranch after her father is assassinated in chapter two; and Helen Moore (Diana Gibson), her friend. It's Mary who rides off with Buck at THE END.

CHAPTER TITLES

1. **Dynamite**
2. **The Maddened Herd**
3. **The Brink of Disaster**
4. **The Phantom Rides**
5. **Trapped by Outlaws**
6. **Shot Down**
7. **Stark Terror**
8. **The Night Attack**
9. **The Indian Raid**
10. **Human Targets**
11. **The Shaft of Doom**
12. **Flaming Gold**
13. **Crashing Timbers**
14. **The Last Chance**
15. **The Outlaw's Vengeance**

Director was Ray Taylor. This was Universal's third serial in '36, (*Drummond*, the fourth).

ADVENTURES OF FRANK MERRIWELL and FLASH GORDON, U's first two releases in '36, will be covered in chapter nine — particularly since *Gordon* is similar in theme to UNDERSEA KINGDOM.



THE CLUTCHING HAND was a good serial despite some involved sub-plots. And the action had its spectacular moments. Thru it all, regardless of what transpired on the screen, one question knawed away: *"Who is The Clutching Hand?"* Probably no "unknown villain" in sound serials (up to '36) generated quite so much interest as this formidable foe of law and order.

You could have easily skipped episodes two thru fourteen and not broken the main thread of the story. On the other hand, if you missed chapter one (yet took in all of the rest of the episodes) you would have lost much of the impact when the denouement came. The weird goings-on in the beginning made for a pleasant, and unexpected, ending. And it was certainly more logical than many "unmaskings." This could probably be credited to the fact the serial was based, albeit loosely, on a novel (by Arthur B. Reeve)—and was not specifically created from scratch for action fans.

In chapter one, Doctor Paul Gironda (Robert Frazer) announces he has discovered a formula for the manufacture of synthetic gold. To help him (financially) develop his formula, he is engaged by the International Research Foundation. Just before the Board of Directors of the Foundation arrive at Gironda's laboratory to witness his achievement, the doctor is heard screaming in his lab. He mysteriously disappears before help arrives.

Walter Jameson (Rex Lease), a newspaper reporter (as well as the fiance of Gironda's daughter, Verna—played by Marion Shilling) calls in ace investigator, Craig Kennedy (Jack Mulhall), to find the abducted scientist. [Editor's Note: Kennedy is not successful in finding the doctor until chapter 13, and then it's aboard the freight ship, Nellie D. He instructs Jameson to return Gironda to his home. Enroute, Jameson's car is overtaken by agents of *The Clutching Hand* and the doctor is once again kidnapped!]

In the final episode, Kennedy reconvenes the International Foundation directors (all of whom are suspect as being *The Clutching Hand*), along with many others. Much like fiction detectives Ellery Queen and Perry Mason, he proceeds to evaluate the clues, come up with Gironda's formula, and expose the doctor's kidnapper.

(Editor's Note: In above photo, to the right of THE CLUTCHING HAND is Yakima Canutt. Next to him is Robert Kortman.)

Doctor Gironda's kidnappers used television in chapter eight to transmit the fact he is still alive. Then *The Clutching Hand* added a spoken warning to Kennedy to quit the case *or else!*

The electrical equipment in Gironda's laboratory (created by Kenneth Strickfaden) was highly imaginative and certainly added to the excitement. In peril is Walter Jameson (Rex Lease). He escapes.

The laboratory of Craig Kennedy (Jack Mulhall) was not nearly so elaborate as Doctor Gironda's. Looking on while Kennedy does an experiment is Gordon Gaunt (William Farnum).

Accusing Denton (Bryant Washburn, at left) of duplicity is Doctor Gironda's wife (Mae Busch). (Ruth Mix, not shown, played Gironda's secretary.) Denton's cohort was Hobart (Charles Locher, later Jon Hall).

CHAPTER TITLES

1. **Who is the Clutching Hand?**
2. **Shadow**
3. **House of Mystery**
4. **The Phantom Car**
5. **The Double Trap**
6. **Steps of Doom**
7. **The Invisible Enemy**
8. **A Cry in the Night**
9. **Evil Eyes**
10. **A Desperate Chance**
11. **The Ship of Peril**
12. **Hidden Danger**
13. **The Mystic Menace**
14. **The Silent Spectre**
15. **The Lone Hand**

MAYHEM aboard the freighter "Nellie D", in which *The Clutching Hand* planned to use to make good his escape in chapter 13. It appears anything but navigable.

Note there are eleven players in the melee and EVERY ONE has managed to retain his headgear intact!

George M. Merrick produced. Direction was by Albert Herman.

Compared to what Republic and Universal offered in '36, SHADOW OF CHINATOWN was an embarrassment. Producer Sam Katzman (for his own Victory Pictures) spent all of his budget on the salaries of Bela Lugosi and Herman Brix, and had little left for production values. Worse yet, he tried to stretch it over fifteen chapters. Or so it would appear. The action was almost nil; most of the sets were cheap (not inexpensive, just plain cheap!).

Granted, the scenario had promise and the cast was good. So, possibly, part of the fault laid with the lethargic direction of Bob Hill and film editing of Charles Henkel.

This was Lugosi's third sound serial and Brix's second. Fortunately for both, they were destined to make better cliff-hangers. And Luana Walters (a remarkably beautiful woman) went on to play the heroine in DRUMS OF FU MANCHU four years later. Even veteran Charles King (who, for the size of his role, should have had top featured billing, but didn't) came upon better days.

The plot. Sonya Rokoff (Waters), an Eurasian, is West Coast representative of a European importing company. She is instructed by her superiors to close San Francisco's Chinatown to tourists because Chinese competition has become too great. To do the job, she enlists the help of Victor Poten (Lugosi)—also an Eurasian, but unknown to her a crazed scientist.

Assigned by her newspaper to investigate the strange happenings in Chinatown is reporter Joan Whiting (Joan Barclay). She enlists the help of novelist Martin Andrews (Brix), who just happened to write a book called SHADOW OF CHINATOWN.

Servile dependents of Poten are Grogan (King) and Healy (William Buchanan, also credited with furnishing "special dialogue" for the serial!!??). Poten's motives are never made crystal clear, except that he hates both the Chinese and the white races.

A bright spot. The conclusion of chapter 14 was not all-bad, thanks to positioning the camera above the action (giving the audience a feeling it was seated in a balcony looking down on what was happening). Poten manipulates a heavy chandelier in the vestibule of Martin's house so that it will come crashing down on anyone entering thru the front door. Sonya (who has now mended her ways) is asleep in the living room. She awakens to see what Poten is up to . . . then notices Martin coming up the walkway to the house. Poten and his henchman flee. Sonya rushes toward the door to warn Martin. Martin opens the door . . . *the chandelier falls!* (Sonya is killed, but Martin avoids becoming a casualty.)

At the finish, Poten, in his car, goes over a dock into the Pacific Ocean—and is apparently drowned, so says the pressbook. [Editor's Note: Not fact. He escapes the watery death only to be apprehended by Martin and handed over to the police.]

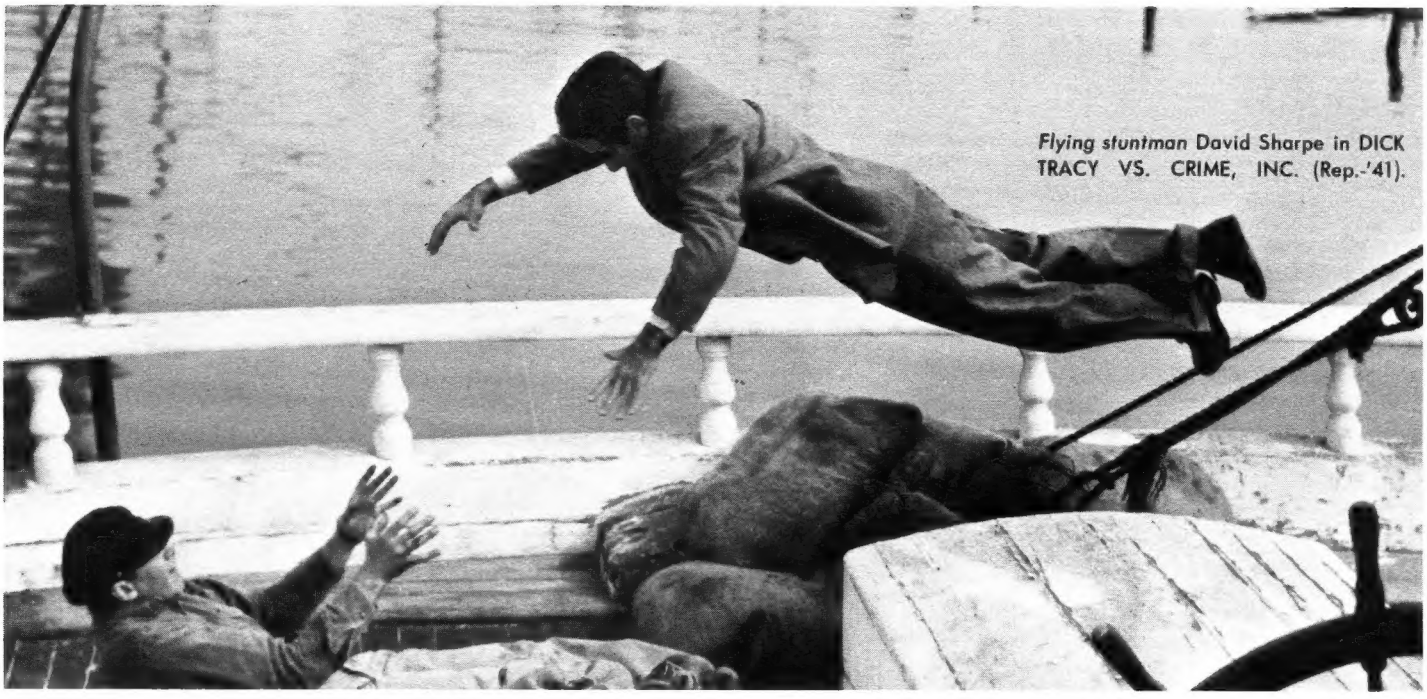
CHAPTER TITLES

1. **The Arms of the God**
2. **The Crushing Arms**
3. **13 Ferguson Alley**
4. **Death on the Wire**
5. **The Sinister Ray**
6. **The Sword Thrower**
7. **The Noose**
8. **Midnight**
9. **The Last Warning**
10. **The Bomb**
11. **Thundering Doom**
12. **Invisible Gas**
13. **The Brink of Disaster**
14. **The Fatal Trap**
15. **The Avenging Powers**

Joan is kidnapped by Poten's henchmen, Grogan and Healy. She prints the word "Help" backwards on a mirror with her lipstick, then flashes it on the wall across the street. Grogan supposedly catches her when he brings her her dinner . . .

. . . however, Martin eventually sees Joan's distress signal. He climbs a telephone pole, then starts hand over hand over the phone wires. The wires break, catapulting him thru a window. His attempts to rescue Joan are jeopardized when he's set upon by a man with a sword.

Halfway thru the serial, Grogan develops an infatuation for Sonya. To keep his henchman loyal, Poten is forced to continually hypnotize him. That is, until he's killed at the end of chapter 13. Shown are Healy (William Buchanan), Grogan (Charles King) and Poten (Bela Lugosi).



Flying stuntman David Sharpe in DICK TRACY VS. CRIME, INC. (Rep.-'41).

KING OF THE STUNTMEN

DAVID SHARPE is the first entrant into the *Hall of Fame* of the world's only MOVIE and TV STUNTMENS MUSEUM. This fact TEMI has learned from John Hagner, director of the museum. Without qualification, the honor is certainly merited by daredevil Sharpe.

The museum opened its doors on November 1, 1970, and is located in California on the grounds of the Antelope Valley Indian Museum, about 50 miles north of Los Angeles. Exhibited are hundreds of rare items relevant to serials. Just a few include the original hoods worn by *Captain America* and *The Spider*, as well as the "mold" of Tom Steele's face used to make the mask he wore as *The Masked Marvel*.

David Sharpe, stuntman extraordinary, has been in motion pictures since the age of seven. He also ventured into vaudeville, circus and stage work. His father, during a tour of duty as a Cavalry Major at Fort Riley, Kansas, taught David how to ride.

Later, Sharpe became a dexterous gymnast and acrobat—and so proficient at his craft he won the Olympic Tumbling Championship two years in a row ('26-'27).

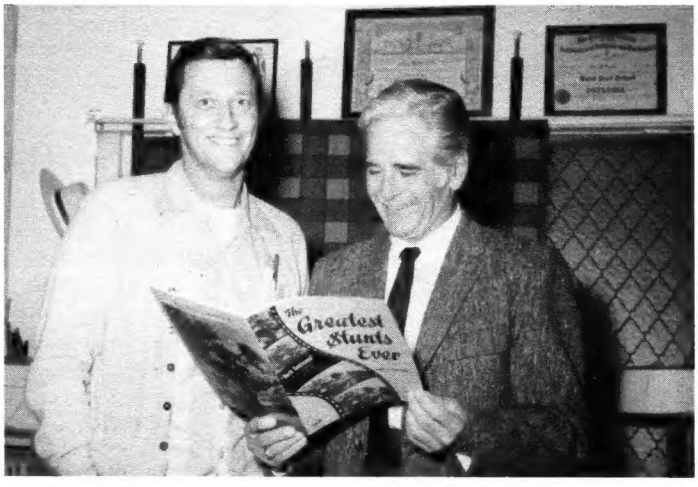
Listing Sharpe's movies would be a monumental task. However, one serial achievement stands out since he received good notices (for his acting!) and so-called "star" billing: DAREDEVILS OF THE RED CIRCLE in 1939. Ironically, he had a stuntman (James Fawcett) *double for him* because the producer could ill afford an injury to a character continuant in the story.

Today, David Sharpe remains physically fit. He is still doing daredevil stunts for "stars" young enough to be his grandchildren. Food for thought for the "Over 40 and Finished" thinkers.

Present at the museum to pay homage to Sharpe when he received his due recognition were many other stuntman *Kings*, including Yakima Canutt, Tom Steele and Duke Green (all of whom will be "recognized" in future chapters of TEMI).

John Hagner (himself a stuntman "until a few surgeries put me out of business") will be happy to provide additional information pertaining to the museum. You can contact him at MOVIE and TV STUNTMENS MUSEUM, 15701 East Avenue M, Lancaster, California 93534 (or phone WHitehall 6-1150 in Lancaster).

DAREDEVILS OF THE RED CIRCLE (Rep.-'39). L. to R. are Herman Brix, Charles Quigley and David Sharpe.



31 YEARS LATER. David Sharpe with Stuntmens Museum director John Hagner, looking over a copy of Hagner's brochure.

THOSE ENDURING SERIAL FANS

Letters from TEMI fans are most welcome. However, the information supplied in these columns by readers is based on their opinions. The editor does not necessarily purport the info to be complete, exact or accurate.

"RED" BARRY'S REJOINDER

So I take my pen in hand to explain, as much as I can, about my doubles (?) in ADVENTURES OF RED RYDER (see pg. 84).

A. Gutierrez says he has "seen stills of 'Red' in which you can see Dave Sharpe's face." This is true. And here is why.

I had my appendix removed during the filming of the serial and when I returned to work (in one week) it was decided by the production office to have me shoot every other day. As a precaution, I was to keep off my feet as much as possible. However, *all* of the action sequences had been shot (prior to my operation) for every episode.

Dave Sharpe and Bill Yrigoyen, both good friends of mine, were hired to fill in so I could keep off my feet. Thus, I suppose, you could say they "doubled" me in this instance—*but not in the action.*

This should also answer Dick Andersen and part of Don Daynard's statements.

With all respect to Mr. Daynard's source of information regarding myself not being the only one considered for the role and that I did not finish the serial, I respectfully suggest to Don Daynard a friendly bet of any amount he might choose.

I repeat, the serial rights to the comic strip character were bought with me in mind, and I was told by Mr. Yates to "make it and finish it."

Ted Mapes, another good friend, may have been suggested for the part, as was Dave Sharpe by directors Bill Witney and Jack English. They did not, and I repeat DID NOT, want me any more than I wanted to do it. But the irony of it is that I suggested other actors for the part and I quote Mr. Yates: "I bought this for you. It will make you a western star, and *you are going to do it.*"

I hope this is a satisfactory explanation. But if Red Ryder fans are not satisfied, I'll be happy to secure affidavits.

Don "Red" Barry
N. Hollywood, Calif.

* * *

CREDIBILITY GAP

I, like some of your other readers, am intrigued over Republic's inclusion in cast credits of important actors who do not appear prominently thruout a serial (and are often killed-off in chapter one). Republic was also guilty of the reverse. Case in point is Tom London in their '47 entry SON OF ZORRO. London plays the chief villain, exposed by Jeff Stewart (George Turner) at the end of chapter 13. Maybe somebody in the know could clarify the reason why London never received screen credit.

A. Gutierrez
Miami, Fla.

"I've never seen a scene from the '34 serial YOUNG EAGLES in *any* publication. Compounding the felony, you alluded to it on pg. 31 — but certainly gave it minimum attention." — Aimo J. Palosaari, Warwickshire, England.

The above lobby card attests to the fact most of the action took place in a jungle. Boy Scout on the left is Jim Vance. The other Scout is Bobby Cox. Between them is Iron Eyes Cody, a genuine Cherokee Indian.

* * *

DARKEST AFRICA

Republic production #894, KING OF JUNGLELAND (reissue title for DARKEST AFRICA) was released April 23, 1949 (and not '48 as shown on pg. 79).

C. Walker
Denver, Colo.

I asked Howard Lydecker, Jr. (head of Republic Pictures' special effects dept.) a number of years back about the "flying" Bat-Men in DARKEST AFRICA (see pgs. 78-9). He explained he always constructed his "dummy flying figures" at least life-size, which helps account for their authentic appearance. So-called flesh parts were composed of rubber. The "dummies" travelled on a pair of piano wires. The only time humans were wire-suspended was in front of a process screen (such as CAPTAIN MARVEL), but there were no such shots in DARKEST AFRICA. All flying scenes used "dummies" and there was a veritable plethora of them.

Found one small "technical" error on pg. 79. Chapter eleven was called "*Jars* (not Jaws) *of Death.*"

Woody Langley
Studio City, Calif.

JUST SUPPOSING

IF Gene Autry ever remakes his first starring serial, let it be called "The Phantom Umpire."

IF John Hagner ever writes his third book on stuntmen, let it be called "The Sharpe Green Sickel Made of Republic Steele."

IF MYSTERIOUS DOCTOR SATAN has to be remade in these modern times, let it be called "Bob and Lois, Speed and Alice."

Howard Adams
Los Angeles, Calif.

VOICE TROUBLE CURED

It's great on page 85 to see three letters discussing the '30 VOICE FROM THE SKY, a serial not listed in the copyright book or any film reference work I know of. I was beginning to think I was the only one who ever saw or remembered it.

James Cleary is 100% right in saying Wally Wales starred, and that the serial was poorly put together.

Advertising copy that I have on this serial states: *Ben Wilson Presents The Startling Mystery THE VOICE FROM THE SKY with Wally Wales and Jean Dolores, Directed by Ben Wilson.*

It is further described as: *A story of a scientist that invented a secret formula that can destroy the world. Come and learn the secret!*

CHAPTER TITLES

1. **Doomed**
2. **The Cave of Horror**
3. **The Man From Nowhere**
4. **Danger Ahead**
5. **Desperate Deeds**
6. **Trail of Vengeance**
7. **The Scarlet Scourge**
8. **Trapped by Fate**
9. **The Pit of Peril**
10. **Hearts of Steel**

As I recall, the scientist was able to suspend all energy in the atmosphere, thus anticipating Klaatu in the '51 "The Day the Earth Stood Still".

Ed Connor
N.Y.C.

THE MYSTERY TROOPER (see two letters below) turned out to be a character supposedly killed-off in the initial episode. Then the obliging producer elected to "expose" him in this last chapter lobby card so those too poor (it was 1931, a Depression Year) to spend a nickel (or dime) to view the wind-up would know the outcome. L. to R. are actors Buzz Barton, Robert Frazer, Blanche Mehaffey, *The Mystery Trooper*, an extra, and veteran villain Al Ferguson.

A MYSTERY RESOLVED

After checking all past chapters of TEMI, I believe I can add yet another independent serial title: TRAIL OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED, starring Robert Frazer. I have chapter five, titled "*Escape from Danger*". Here's what appears in the actual film credits. TRAIL OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED, Guaranteed Picture Company Inc., Copyrighted (no date given) and passed by the National Board of Review. Story - Flora E. Douglas; Continuity and Dialogue - Carl Krusada; Editor - Frederick Bain; Photography - William Nobles and Edward Kull; Assistant Directors - Armand Schaefer and Raymond Hines; Directed by Stuart Paton.

The Players: Jack Logan (Robert Frazer); Helen (Blanche Mehaffey); Billy (Buzz Barton); Jean Gregg (Al Ferguson); Mack (Charles King); Red Eagle (William Bertram); White Cloud (Himself).

Roughly speaking (very roughly!), from what I could gather the story concerns two pieces of a map locating a valuable piece of property. Chapter five ends with the words (paraphrased) don't miss chapter six, "*Flames of Doom.*"

Altho there is no date given on the credits, judging by the looks of Charles King it appears to have been made prior to '35. King doesn't seem to have an ounce of fat in sight!

George Reed
Phila., Penna.

When you have the space in some future chapter, please print this on TRAIL OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED (which originally saw light as THE MYSTERY TROOPER).

After a great deal of research, I am convinced that TRAIL is no more than a reissue of TROOPER (see pg. 9). Ads for TRAIL duplicated the plot and cast, but the chapter titles were changed.

Jim Stringham
Lansing, Mich.

THE MYSTERY TROOPER

1. **The Trap of Terror**
2. **Paths of Peril**
3. **Fighting Fate**
4. **The Cave of Horror**
5. **The House of Hate**
6. **The Day of Doom**
7. **The Death Trail**
8. **The Killer Dogs**
9. **The Ghost City**
10. **The Lost Treasure**

TRAIL OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED

1. **Clutches of Death**
2. **The Perilous Trail**
3. **Shadows of Evil**
4. **The Pit of Doom**
5. **Escape from Danger**
6. **The Devil's Warning**
7. **Path of Fate**
8. **Fangs of the Killer**
9. **The Phantom Warning**
10. **Fight to the Finish**

Editor's Note: The two letters arriving at practically the same time is coincidental. We checked further with Stringham and his info on TRAIL (from ads) shows: William Von Brencken (probably actor William Von Brincken) as Red Eagle, Charles King as "Al"; and, chapter six as "The Devil's Warning."

* * *

SHELLEY WINTERS

Can someone identify what Columbia serial (probably in '43) that Shelley Winter (before the "s" was added) made an appearance?

Jim Haspiel
N.Y.C.

RIDERS OF DEATH VALLEY

I enjoyed very much the coverage you gave RIDERS on pg. 88. The words "Epic in Scope . . . Tremendous in Sweep" clearly define chapter #7: "*Death Rides the Storm.*" In it, Dick Foran as Jim Benton rides onto a stage set. The separation between the floor and backdrop is in evidence. Someone on the staff tried to make the set more convincing by building up a little pile of sand which extends to the (photograph) backdrop and is intended to resemble the end of the sand dune. Not to mention that part of the storm sequence is from FLASH GORDON'S TRIP TO MARS. At the end of chapter #7 (and prior to entering the storm), Jim is shot by one of Wolf Reade's henchmen. In #8, Jim must consider this bullet wound as only superficial, because he goes thru eight more chapters without having to see a doctor. It is unbelievable, but then, I suppose Jim did not want to appear human in front of the other RIDERS OF DEATH VALLEY. All kidding aside, it was a good chapter-play, with episode twelve an outstanding odd chapter for any film collector.

Neil Shaver
Port Washington, Wisc.

* * *

DICK TRACY

I once wrote Chester Gould to ask him if Jack Holt was his inspiration for Dick Tracy. He didn't reply until he saw me on The Ed Sullivan Show doing my imitation of Ed. His letter was most complimentary and he included the fact that Dick Tracy was supposed to look like "an American Sherlock Holmes"—hence the bent nose.

Will Jordan
N.Y.C.

I have never seen DICK TRACY, but off-hand cannot agree that concealing *The Lame One's* use of a disguise is a booboo (pg. 83). I just saw the rare "Mystery of the Wax Museum" ('32), and the audience is not meant to know that Lionel Atwill is wearing a false, "normal" wax face thruout the film to cover his hideously scarred real face. It is impossible to guess until the climax and comes as a big surprise (except that everyone knows the plot before seeing the film!). Unmasking *The Lame One* sounds like a fun surprise.

Ron Hall
Minneapolis, Minn.

I must take exception to your statement in DICK TRACY (pg. 83): "Moloch and his damn cat . . ." How dare you say damn *cat!* Like millions of others, I adore cats. Hope you have nightmares filled with cats until you publicly apologize to all cats everywhere. Excluding this, I'm delighted over TEMI and look forward to each chapter. P.S. My cat is a good traveler and says she'll come out (to Michigan) and bite you.

Ray Powell
Collingswood, N.J.

Editor's Note: Woe is me. My sincere apologies to all felines and their owners. Seems that sometimes I become too catty while pounding out a story and get carried away.

THAT ENDURING "MATINEE IDOLS" EDITOR

First a note of thanks to A. Gutierrez, Eric Hoffman and Jim Stringham. They loaned to us photos for this chapter. Also Kudos to Sue Eisler. She does much of our typing in her spare moments. *** Our necrology, CHAPTER 13, for the second time in a row is missing. That's because we have Bill Stewart helping us work up something *special* for this department to appear in the Feb.-March TEMI. Also missing is PREVIEWS. That will return, too. *** Congratulations to subscriber David Zinman for including a serial, FLASH GORDON, in his excellent book "50 Classic Motion Pictures" (Crown is the publisher). It's available thru all bookstores. *** Two villains of renown are shown in the masthead: Tony Warde and I. Stanford Jolley. The photos are from THE BLACK WIDOW (Rep.-'47). *** TEMI is looking for more contributors who have unusual material or first-hand knowledge of serial greats they would like to share with other readers.

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DON "RED" BARRY